

HONORING TIMOTHY ZACHARIAH
HANNON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Timothy Zachariah Hannon of Gladstone, Missouri. Timothy is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Timothy has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Timothy has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Timothy Zachariah Hannon for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY-
FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACT

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I have tried come up with legislation that would give us more than 24 hours in a day—but I have not figured out how to do that. So for the time being, I am introducing the Family-Friendly Workplace Act that aims to give working people the opportunity to spend more time with their families.

Last week marked the 16th anniversary of the enactment of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, FMLA, which provides important job protections for America's working families who take leave for the birth or adoption of a child or because of one's own serious health condition or that of a family member. The Family-Friendly Workplace Act would complement the FMLA by providing employees with an option to accrue paid time off, which could then be taken by the employee at a later date. Under the Family-Friendly Workplace Act, compensatory time, known as "comp time," belongs to the employee, and the employee can use it for any purpose, at any time. Hourly paid workers are often less able to take unpaid leave under FMLA. In contrast, comp time is directed specifically at hourly workers, giving hourly workers the opportunity to have the same flexibility that salaried workers, as well as workers in the public sector, already enjoy.

As we all know, time is one of our most precious resources. We all want more of it, and yet we only have 24 hours in a day. That means we have to figure out how to work a full day, run errands, pack lunches, make dinner, and spend quality time with our kids, spouse, or elderly parent.

One of the biggest struggles parents face is how to balance work and family. Being a new mom myself, I struggle with balancing these

aspects every day. This bill will give people more flexibility so workers can put in the time they need to get the job done, but also make sure they can make the school play, stay home with a sick child, or care for an elderly parent.

The perception is that working mothers and parents have a greater desire for workplace flexibility than other workers; the reality is that men and women, parents and non-parents, younger and older workers alike place a high priority on increased flexibility at work.

A study by the Employment Family Foundation found that a significant majority, 75 percent, of workers prefer time off instead of overtime pay, and more than eight in ten women, 81 percent, prefer to have that benefit as well.

For many employers, flexible work arrangements are necessary to attract and retain quality employees. In return for offering employees alternative work arrangements and greater flexibility in work schedules, employers gain a workforce that is more productive, committed, and focused. For example, an insurance company in my home State of Washington saw per-employee revenue increase 70 percent over 5 years after implementing flexible work options.

In talking with Wayne Williams, president and CEO of Telect in Spokane, Washington, he told me that they are doing more to give their employees greater flexibility including personal days and utilizing technology to give them the flexibility to work from home.

This isn't just a workforce issue; it is also a community and family issue.

The bill I am introducing would allow private sector employers the option to offer employees additional time off in lieu of overtime pay. One of the greatest obstacles to flexibility in the workplace is the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, known as the "FLSA," which governs the work schedules and pay of millions of hourly workers. While the law may have been a good fit for the workforce in the 1930s, a lot has changed in 70 years, and FLSA is simply not relevant to the needs of modern families.

Our labor force isn't what it used to be. Between 1950 and 2000, the labor force participation rate of women between 25 and 55 years of age more than doubled. Today, more than 75 percent of these women are in the labor market. Less than 12 percent of mothers with children under the age of six were in the labor force in 1950. Today, more than 60 percent work outside the home.

The FLSA fails to address the needs and preferences of employees in the area of flexible work schedules. Although salaried employees typically have greater flexibility in their day-to-day schedules, hourly employees are much more restricted—due in large part to the outdated FLSA—in their ability to gain greater flexibility in their work schedules.

The goal of the Family-Friendly Workplace Act is simple: to reconcile the overtime requirements under the FLSA with employee demands for increased workplace flexibility. Specifically, the bill would give private sector employers the option of allowing their employees to voluntarily choose paid comp time off in lieu of overtime pay. Since 1985, public sector employees have been able to bank comp time hours in order to have additional time off for vacation or other family needs. There is no justification for denying private sector employees an option under the FLSA which, by most

accounts, has been successful and immensely popular with public sector hourly employees for over 20 years.

To be clear, the Family-Friendly Workplace Act would not change the employer's obligation under the FLSA to pay overtime at the rate of one-and-one-half times an employee's regular rate of pay for any hours worked over 40 in a seven day period. The bill would simply allow overtime compensation to be given—at the employee's request—as paid comp time off, at the rate of one-and-one-half hours of comp time for each hour of overtime worked, provided the employee and the employer agree on that form of overtime compensation. The bill contains numerous protections to ensure that the choice and use of comp time is a decision made by the employee.

Since we can't do anything about adding more hours to the day, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting something that gives us a little more flexibility in how we spend that time—the Family-Friendly Workplace Act. We need to respond to the growing needs of workers who want to better integrate work and family. Let's allow working women and men to decide for themselves whether paid time off or extra pay best fits their needs and that of their families.

HONORING THOMAS ALAN
PRINSLOW

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Thomas Alan Prinslow of Kansas City, Missouri. Thomas is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Thomas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Thomas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Thomas Alan Prinslow for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO IVO KRAMER,
AUGLAIZE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is my honor today to pay tribute to former Auglaize County Commissioner Ivo Kramer of Wapakoneta, Ohio. Ivo retired at the end of 2008 after twelve years of outstanding service to the people of Auglaize County.

Ivo was first elected to the Board of Commissioners in 1997 following a distinguished 40-year career with the United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service (later renamed the Natural Resources